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INFORMATION REPORT

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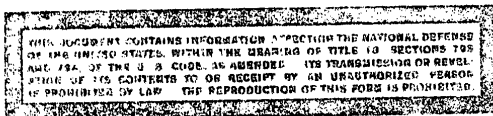
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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. After February 1948, the Social Democratic Party automatically merged with the Communist Party. Files, lists of members, and Party funds went to the Communists without protest from Social Democratic politicians. Those few who protested were soon talked into Party obedience. An exception was the group around the poet Jaroslav Seifert and the writer Vaclav Chab. Seifert was the editor of an educational column in the Social Democratic Pravo Lidu and was transferred to the Prace staff after 1948. Seifert took the Communist-Social Democratic Party agreement seriously and tried to make Prace a workers' paper. He met opposition from the URO, run by Antonin Zapotocky, Evzen Erban, etc., who wanted to use Prace as a general newspaper with a clear Communist line. Seifert balked, feigned illness, and left Prace. Minister Vaclav Kopecky offered him free cooperation with the group of poets associated with Vit Nezval, being interested both in Seifert's work and his proletarian origin. After the Rudolf Slansky trial, Slansky's clique was blamed for "repudiating" Seifert, Hrubin, Bednar, and other literary figures. However, this changed nothing in Seifert's and other ex-Social Democratic intellectuals' political credo. Unlike the politicians of the Social Democratic Party, the Social Democratic writers and intellectuals did not betray the old Party line. Egon Hostovsky resigned from his diplomatic post in Sweden after the 1948 coup.

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2. With Vaclav Dundr, secretary of the Party, who died in jail in 1953, there also died an era of the Czech Social Democratic Party. Dundr had followed the development of the party through the old Austrian Empire, the Czechoslovak Republic and the German occupation up to the Communist coup. His protégé was Blazej Vilim, whom old Dundr guided from the background. As long as Dundr influenced the Party, the Social Democrats were loyal to the late president Eduard Benes.
3. Blazej Vilim hesitated in the changed political conditions of 1948, tempted by a dream of having a big political career. Only when Slansky made it clear to him that he was still branded as a "Dundr pupil" did Vilim make up his mind and escape from Czechoslovakia. Many younger Party politicians suffered from the same kind of mirage as Vilim; this applies to Arno Hais, who, moreover, had to clear his name of World War II collaboration with the Germans.
4. Vaclav Majer, the leader of the exiled Social Democratic Party, widespread sympathy of Party members inside Czechoslovakia. Recently Bohumil Lausman's "repatriation" and news about Majer's forming a so-called "red-green" coalition with the agrarian politician Cerny in Washington thinned the ranks of Social Democratic Party admirers.
5. After Lausman's return, the rest of the true Social Democrats were arrested. The leader of the underground Socialist Party was an employee of the IBM office in Prague 2, Ve Smeckach, who came from the Kladno area. The Kladno miners and steel workers are opposed to communism. Many old timers, who know Zapotocky, Nosek, etc, are personally bitter and disappointed about the social progress of the new régime.

Comment: Central Trade Union Council (Ustredni rad odboru).

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